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ABSTRACT

The proceedings of a regional working conference on educational and employment equity for Blacks and Hispanics in New England is presented. The purpose of the conference was to address the nine findings and 20 recommendations set forth in a recent New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) report, "Equity and Pluralism," which warns that while New England is touted as the higher education capital of the world, opportunity is limited for Blacks and Hispanics hailing from New England. Panels were titled as follows: "Pluralism in the Workplace," "Supporting Educational Achievements of Blacks and Hispanics," "Creating Pluralism on Campus," "How Television, Radio, and Newspapers Can Nurture Minority Aspirations and Achievements," "Government's Role in Promoting Minority Advancement," and "Helping Community College Graduates Move on to Four Year Colleges." Two addresses were "The Competitiveness and Change in New England Business" (Badi Foster) and "Quality and Opportunity: The Unfinished Agenda" (Paul Tsongas). Plans of action for Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont are included. Three appendices are: a summary of the findings and recommendations of the NEBHE's Task Force on Black and Hispanic Student Enrollment and Retention in New England, January 1980; a list of events and papers presented at the Summit on Educational and Employment Opportunity in New England; and a list of the members of the NEBHE Task Force on Black and Hispanic Student Enrollment and Retention in New England. (SM)

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EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR BLACKS AND HISPANICS: STRATEGIES FOR NEW ENGLAND

The Results of a Regional Working Conference on Equity and Pluralism

Newport, Rhode Island

HE 022 915

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NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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*See APPENDIX B for names of panelists as well as leaders of state delegations.

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Digital Equipment Corporation generously published these conference proceedings. The proceedings were written by JoAnn Moody, Associate Vice President at the New England Board of Higher Education.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

Summit on Educational and Employment Opportunity
for Blacks and Hispanics in New England
April 4-5, 1989
Newport, Rhode Island

Summit Co-Sponsors: New England Board of Higher Education
New England Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel
Institute for Educational Opportunity (Washington, D.C.)

Purpose of the Summit

A select group of leaders from four sectors--business, media, government, and education--in the six New England states were invited to the Summit by the co-sponsors. Purpose: address the nine findings and 20 recommendations set forth in the recently released NEBHE report, Equity and Pluralism: Full Participation of Blacks and Hispanics in New England Higher Education; and help the New England region and these major sectors move towards implementation of the action recommendations. (See Appendix for a summary of the findings and recommendations.)

A total of 143 leaders participated in the Summit. Insights and action plans generated at the Summit are summarized below. Wide dissemination of these proceedings, the co-sponsors hope, will prompt additional discussions and constructive actions throughout the region. Special thanks to the Digital Equipment Corporation for publishing the proceedings.

The Problem

The report, Equity and Pluralism, warns that while New England is touted as the higher education capital of the world, opportunity is "clearly limited" for Blacks and Hispanics hailing from New England to secure undergraduate and graduate degrees. Blacks and Hispanics now receive only 3.7 percent of all bachelor's degrees, 3.4 percent of master's degree, and 4.3 percent of doctorates awarded by New England campuses. Yet Blacks and Hispanics represent 6.2 percent of the region's population and a large proportion of New England's youth. A significant number of Black and Hispanic undergraduate and graduate students at New England's selective colleges and universities are recruited from outside the region. In short, New England must ensure greater educational opportunities for its own Black and Hispanic residents.

Because the economy of the region is knowledge-intensive, demand for highly educated and skilled workers will continue to be strong, according to Equity and Pluralism. In fact, shortages of educated workers have already surfaced in several areas of the region. It is imperative that a far greater number of Black and Hispanic residents from New England pursue higher education and then enter the region's labor force.

To provide greater educational and employment opportunities for Blacks and Hispanics, Equity and Pluralism calls for concerted action from leaders in business, the media, government, and education. The purpose of the Summit was

to mobilize these four sectors and move towards implementation of the action recommendations in Equity and Pluralism.

PANEL: "PLURALISM IN THE WORKPLACE"

The Role of Small Business

Small businesses, not just large corporations, must become partners with schools and colleges. The Boston Compact and the Boston Plan for Excellence are recent examples of big businesses' involvement with inner-city schools and schoolchildren. There is much, however, that small businesses can do and should be encouraged to do. This view was advanced by panelist Fernando Comulada, Connecticut business leader and entrepreneur (president of Comulada Enterprises, Ltd.).

For example, small businesses can give certain employees several hours off each month to serve as mentors to high school and college students and to assist in the classroom with lab experiments and special projects. If younger students are hired as part-time employees, their educational dreams can be nourished. In his supermarkets, Comulada employs 10th- and 11th-graders who have solid academic averages and are recommended by their teachers. Savings for future educational expenses that the students squirrel away are matched by Comulada's business.

Sensitivity workshops and role-playing for supervisors are a necessity in the workplace, Comulada maintained. These sessions help managers learn to value differences among those they supervise, as well as feel comfortable with a pluralistic workforce. Affirmative action in hiring and promotion is improved through such workshops and awareness sessions.

Pluralism as a Personnel Policy

"Value differences" is indeed a personnel policy at Digital Equipment Corp., with its various decentralized plants in New England and worldwide and its 124,000 employees. Panelist Reynaldo Cruz, a DEC manufacturing project manager, explained that ongoing sensitivity workshops for managers and employees help them to eradicate narrow and stereotypical thinking about people different from themselves. Cruz, one of the instructors of these sensitivity workshops, explained that senior managers at DEC in the late 1970s saw that their workforce would have to become more pluralistic and at that time initiated the corporate personnel policy. A "Cultural Board" at DEC (established in 1987 and made up of middle managers with diverse racial, sexual, ethnic and cultural identities and backgrounds) is now considering what other follow-up personnel policies may be needed.

DEC is very interested in becoming more involved with students in schools and colleges and helping to improve the learning process. Several middle managers from DEC are attending this conference, with that goal in mind.

Assistance to an Immigrant Workforce

English-as-a-Second-Language classes are offered in the workplace for the immigrant workforce at Hasbro Corp., in Rhode Island, according to Hasbro's personnel manager, Margaret Costa. The company provides the instructors and all the materials for the course, which is open to all employees and their dependents. A tuition-reimbursement plan is provided for employees (the plan

has been used to secure high-school diplomas as well as masters' degrees in business administration). Hasbro management is also considering the company's "adopting" one or two public school systems in the local area. Special relationships between the schools and the business would result: academic coaching and mentoring as well as guest lectures by Hasbro employees; student field trips to the company; and the company's support in obtaining various resources for the schools, to name a few possibilities.

In addition, employees' children are eligible for modest but symbolically important scholarships from the corporation. Promotion of employees from within the organization is aided by an "internal posting" of all available jobs. The personnel office also helps by allowing employees to take on additional responsibilities on a temporary basis to prepare for future openings, and in general cultivates a pro-active relationship with Hasbro workers. By these actions, Hasbro has benefited from an extremely loyal and dedicated workfore, Costa concluded.

Lack of Knowledge Reenforces Stereotypical Thinking

Panelist Ronald Homer, president and chief executive officer at the Boston Bank of Commerce, recounted a personal experience which helped to crystallize some of the issues being addressed at the Summit. A few years ago Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone predicted that the United States would in the long run be unable to compete with his country because "Blacks and Hispanics in the U.S. bring down the intelligence level of Americans." Outraged by such a statement, Homer and several colleagues published a protest through full-page ads in the New York Times and Wall Street Journal. The Japanese embassy then called and invited Homer and his cohorts to meet with the prime minister in Japan and begin a dialogue. The results of the talks were new partnerships and trading contracts between Japanese business leaders and the Homer group. Increased familiarity with one another brought about business deals and dispelled stereotypical thinking.

American society, unlike Japanese society, is diverse, Homer reminded participants. American businesses must learn to draw strengths from the different perspectives, cultural assumptions and orientations of their workers. American schools and colleges and universities must learn how to better serve and educate minorities. If they do not, this country's competitive position in the world marketplace will continue to erode.

During the question-and-answer session, Homer urged colleges and universities to use their economic clout to promote social justice: purchase supplies and services from minority-owned businesses or from majority-owned corporations committed to pluralism in the workplace. He also urged campuses to lobby and use their political power to ensure adequate scholarship funds for minority students.

Panel Moderator Ken Rossano (director of development for the Bank of Boston) concluded that business has a vested interest in improving the learning process in public schools: more than 50 percent of employees in entry-level jobs fail to meet the minimum requirements of the positions. Basic skills are not being mastered.

PANEL: "SUPPORTING EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF BLACKS AND HISPANICS"

Demystify the Minority Condition

Gayle Pemberton, director of minority affairs and lecturer in English at Bowdoin College in Maine, urged leaders at the Summit to help "demystify the minority condition." Black and Hispanic citizens are not "aliens" even though "cultural imagery suggests they live on the margins of the culture and are not really partners in a collective enterprise," she said. New imagery is needed. Nor should the problems of minority populations be dwelled on to the exclusion of their achievements and normalcy. In addition, other dispossessed groups, such as poor whites, should be befriended and supported. The commonality of those least served would be a healthy theme to stress.

Campus faculty "must be educated to reality," as Pemberton explains more fully in her monograph, "On Teaching the Minority Student." Esoteric subjects such as literary theory take faculty further and further away from real-life concerns. In turn, they come to regard as worthy of their attention only those students planning to follow in their specialized footsteps.

"Grow Your Own," a strategy recommended in Equity and Pluralism, seems highly sensible to Pemberton. Campuses should identify promising Black and Hispanic graduate students, provide them with mentors and special encouragement, and then either hire them as junior faculty after they graduate or help place them at other campuses within New England.

Lack of Knowledge Reenforces Stereotypical Thinking

Panelist Gail Leftwich, an attorney with Goodwin, Procter and Hoar in Boston, agreed that Blacks and Hispanics are often viewed as aliens because there is a lack of knowledge between majority and minority groups. The division of "Them" and "Us" must be blurred. "Break down perceived barriers" by learning more about one another. Insist that various specialized support groups on campuses get to know one another and cultivate the "connectedness" that often results, for instance, from team sports. While learning more about various cultures and broadening one's cultural appreciation should be one outcome of a college education, at present there is far too much emphasis on European civilization in the college curriculum. Knowing more about one another is a key strategy that must be pursued conscientiously by leaders at this Summit.

Racism

Based on extensive discussions with minority faculty and students at campuses throughout New England, Charles Desmond cited racism as far more "insidious and prevalent" than hitherto recognized. Desmond, the third panelist, serves as vice chancellor for student affairs at the Boston campus of the University of Massachusetts.

Racism -- tragically undermining the academic achievements of minority students and faculty -- must be squarely faced and eliminated. An appreciation for pluralism must be cultivated on campus; mentors and support services for those who need them must be generously provided. Only when there is a "pluralistic and caring atmosphere on campus" can minority and majority students truly thrive.

Early Intervention

Praising Upward Bound, Talent Search, and other early intervention efforts as "programs whose time has come," Sylvia Simmons called for more outreach to minority youngsters of junior high age and younger, to be conducted by churches, campuses, and civic organizations. Simmons, the senior vice president at the Massachusetts Higher Education Assistance Corporation, is former chair of the board of trustees of North Shore Community College.

A New England Scholars programs, Simmons suggested, could identify promising minority students in junior high, provide them with mentors and positive attention, follow the students through to graduation from college, and assist in placing them in jobs throughout New England. In addition, Simmons recommended that far more information about financial aid and the possibility of attending college be disseminated in minority communities. Negative publicity about cutbacks in student grants and the rising burden of student loans may act as a "self-fulfilling prophecy" that frightens away students.

Matthew Lamstein, panel moderator and director of the Upward Bound Program at the University of New Hampshire, underlined the importance of involving all four sectors--business, education, government, and media--if fuller participation of Hispanics and Blacks in higher education and the workforce is to be attained.

PANEL: "CREATING PLURALISM ON CAMPUS"

Leadership on Campus

Strong leadership from the college or university president must be forthcoming, to create a hospitable climate and retain a far greater number of Hispanic and Black students and faculty. Panelist Sara Melendez, vice provost and executive assistant to the president at the University of Bridgeport, added that the president and board of trustees should formulate a long-term plan of action for the institution, ask for periodic reports from faculty and staff on progress towards pluralism and establish rewards and sanctions to underscore the seriousness of the goal. Melendez recommended: "Discuss the topic of pluralism at every board of trustees meeting, every faculty meeting, every department meeting and every staff meeting. The president must show his/her determination to have the goal met. Lip service will not suffice."

In addition, "everyone in the campus community should think about their institution's practices, climate, structure, and customs that need to be changed to make the campus more hospitable to minorities."

Finally, faculty members should take a leadership position. Their influence, especially with students, is incalculable. In fact, "each one of us can be a leader and become part of the eventual solution."

Enrolling and Graduating More Black and Hispanic Students

Melendez advised that campuses must seek non-traditional Black and Hispanic students and cease the "cut-throat academic competition" for minority super-achievers. "Use a variety of measures to gauge talent and promise," she urged. [The NEBHE report points out that SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) scores have been shown to be unreliable in predicting the success of minority

and women students.] Several participants claimed that minority students with SAT scores lower than an institution's so-called median SAT score will typically draw back and not apply. The SAT median score typically has a counterproductive "chilling effect" on minority students.

Other measures of talent should be developed, according to Melendez. While campuses may be wise to relax their academic standards slightly when considering the enrollment of non-traditional students, they should raise their standards for graduation, and ensure that all students have mastered the requisite skills. When extra tutoring and mentoring are needed by any student, such special attention should be provided.

One Road to Campus Pluralism

Wesleyan University has been repeatedly cited for its success in enrolling and graduating a significant and growing number of Black and Hispanic students. Edgar Beckham, dean of the college at Wesleyan and the second panelist, "reflected on 25 years spent observing and participating in Wesleyan's efforts to promote pluralism."

Ethical Correction

In the mid-1960s, at a "moment of ethical correction," Wesleyan officials "concluded that the campus had succumbed to the prejudices and discriminatory practices characteristic of American culture and thereby denied regularly, if not systematically, members of minority groups access to the University." By means of aggressive recruitment, the campus in the fall of 1965 enrolled 12 Black and two Hispanic students. (The director of admissions at that time was John Hoy, now president of the New England Board of Higher Education.)

Age of Discovery

From 1965 until the late 1970s, Wesleyan continued its minority recruitment and successfully learned--"at times with pain and bitterness"--how to accommodate the new populations of students. For their part, Beckham explained, "the new minority students learned first how to survive and then go beyond survival to 'ownership' of the Wesleyan environment."

Diversity

Now approaching the end of the era of diversity, Wesleyan "celebrates and markets the diverse natures and backgrounds of its students." But it has had to learn how to promote not only the differentness of the student body (race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, political ideology, gender, sexual preference, age, social affiliation) but also the commonality of values and the spirit of community. "The problem has been one of recreating and sustaining community while continuing to exploit the richness of diversity."

Pluralism

Wesleyan is approaching but has not yet reached this stage where "our differences will become part of our shared self-esteem." "Different groups will inquire into and celebrate their own cultural heritage," as Beckham describes it, "and Wesleyan will celebrate the celebrations." [A committee at Brown University has described pluralism as "that state of affairs in which several distinct ethnic, religious and racial communities live side by side, willing to affirm each

other's dignity, ready to benefit from each other's experience, and quick to acknowledge each other's contributions to the common welfare."]

To Eradicate Racism: Specific Strategies

For nine years, the Wesleyan Committee on Human Rights and Relations has monitored interpersonal and intergroup relations on campus. Incidents of racism, sexism and homophobia have been brought to the attention of the community; the committee sponsors workshops for minority and majority students. The work of the committee is credited with substantially heightening awareness of the issues and promoting more sensitive dealings among all on campus.

Over the years, the presidents of Wesleyan have demonstrated strong personal commitment to eradicating racism and moving the campus towards pluralism. A Wesleyan chapter of Students Organized Against Racism (SOAR) holds sensitivity workshops in the dormitories as well as Racial Awareness Week and other forums for the entire community.

To Promote Academic Achievements of Minority Students: Specific Strategies

The Asian-American, Black, and Hispanic student organizations at Wesleyan have formed a council actively supporting the academic pursuits of minority students.

Mentoring of minority students is donated by attentive "coaches" drawn from alumni, both minority and majority.

The dean's office, by means of longitudinal tracking of the academic performance of the university's minority students, has gained practical insights into how to enhance retention and graduation.

With funding from the Mellon Foundation, a Wesleyan program will identify and support promising Black, Hispanic, and Native American undergraduate students as they move towards attainment of doctoral degrees and preparation for college faculty positions at American campuses.

With funding from the Hughes Foundation, special attention is given to minority students to enhance their success and performance in the life sciences.

To Increase the Number of Minority Faculty: Specific Strategies

Both panelists, Melendez and Beckham, agreed with the NEBHE report, Equity and Pluralism: "growing your own" faculty is one of the most effective strategies. Promising Black and Hispanic graduate students are brought in, provided with suitable mentors and coaching, and then hired after graduation as junior faculty. In addition, at Wesleyan, an ad hoc group of trustees, faculty, administrators and alumni are working informally to secure more faculty.

The highly specific insights from Melendez and Beckham will serve us well, remarked the panel's moderator, Beth Warren, executive director of human resources at the University of Southern Maine. New England, touted to be the higher education capital of the world, enrolls and graduates a disappointingly low number of Black and Hispanic students who hail from the six-state region. We must take better care of our own residents, Warren concluded.

PANEL: "HOW TELEVISION, RADIO, AND NEWSPAPERS CAN NURTURE MINORITY ASPIRATIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS"

Place Constructive Pressure on Media Leaders

Community leaders--minority and majority--should go to the offices of media policymakers or write to them. Insist that television and radio programs and newspapers articles more frequently nurture, in pro-active ways, the educational dreams of Hispanic and Black youth, said Donna Latson Gittens, vice president of community affairs at WCVB-TV (Needham, MA). Moreover, "it is important and critical to alert media to everyday lifestyle stories as well as the sensational--to ensure a consistent and balanced view of Black and Hispanic communities in the society as a whole." Gittens urged community and education leaders to make dialogue with media officials a more routine happening.

A participant called on the media to aggressively market the message "Stay in School." Variations on that theme (such as "A mind is a terrible thing to waste") and human-interest stories showing the joy and economic value of education--these would positively influence and encourage Black and Hispanic youth.

New Imagery Needed

The news media are "too often guilty of portraying African-Americans and Latinos as solely causing or being beset with problems." These narrowly drawn and often negative images can lead to minority youth thinking of themselves as a "deficient people," maintained panelist Jeff Rivers, associate editor of the Hartford Courant. Rather than portraying minorities in a monolithic manner, print and broadcast journalists should be more sensitive to the "wide diversity among people of color and include far more stories that reflect the full spectrum of the minority experience in the United States." It is the media's responsibility to change its simplistic assumptions about people of color. Through involving themselves with community life and working for constructive change, newspapers and radio/television stations will not only learn more about differences but also show that they care about educational aspirations and achievements and their cultivation.

Media's Power to Interpret the Facts

Cecilia Soriano Bresnahan (principal with the Boston Communications Group and co-host of the WBZ-TV program, **Centro**) described the effect television news had on her as a child growing up in Texas. Stark was the difference between set of facts presented on her hometown's English-speaking newscast and the same facts presented on the Spanish-speaking newscast in the same town. Do not forget, Bresnahan warned, that journalists, reporters, and editors bring their own cultural biases and prejudices to their work. Media officials must overcome these prejudices: the outside community must insist that this happen.

Partnership Between Media and the Community

Good managers in the media must reach out and listen, according to John Sawhill, panel moderator and general manager as well as vice president of WJAR-TV in Providence. Given the enormous power of newspapers, radio and television to shape people's attitudes and lives, the media must be held accountable and responsible. One way to do this is to insist that managers work in community organizations, where they are in routine contact with outside leaders and hear reactions to their programs and where they can have a

share in projects directed towards the common good. At WJAR, all department heads must serve actively on the board of directors of at least two non-profit organizations. One-half to one-third of these organizations center on minority concerns.

In addition, the station has an outreach hiring program focused on minorities. According to Sawhill, "through station managers' involvement with community groups, we have been able to identify (with difficulty) a pool of qualifiable if not qualified employees. Leaders of minority groups need to help employers in their outreach if the hiring process is to be successful."

PANEL: "GOVERNMENT'S ROLES IN PROMOTING MINORITY ADVANCEMENT"

Day Care and Scholarships

Massachusetts Senator John Olver, chairman of the Senate Taxation Committee, cited significant population shifts for the rest of the century: more people retiring from the workforce than reaching the age of 18; a relatively low U.S. birth rate; an increase in the number of youth from minority families and financially impoverished families.

To cope with these demographic facts, government must provide daycare services and facilities for its employees and encourage far more corporations to do the same. Olver has taken a leadership role on this issue. Scholarships for financially needy students are also essential. While Massachusetts between 1982 and 1988 substantially improved its scholarship funding, recently there has been no increase. The state must work to ensure that four-year public campuses accept the academic credit being transferred from community colleges. Because so many Black and Hispanic students begin their higher-education careers in community colleges, it is imperative that roadblocks to their transfer to four-year campuses be removed.

It is "puzzling" that other campuses, public and independent, have not adopted innovative work-internship programs similar to the "cooperative education" tracks at Northeastern University, where students are required to work in a variety of business settings as part of their degree requirements. Olver added that state governments also should provide greater financial aid for graduate students and offer loan forgiveness programs for those who assume teaching posts in the state.

While Massachusetts has the third highest per-capita income in the United States, the percentage of that income now devoted to public services now ranks 39th among the 50 states. The present mood in the state, according to Olver, seeks to "cripple" the public sector. Recently, in the senator's opinion, the state has "not done anything significant to help minorities or the poor."

Outreach to Elementary and High School Students

To stimulate youngsters' early creativity in science and technology, state agencies should encourage and assist with existing enrichment programs for elementary and secondary schools now sponsored by business and higher education. In addition, Fernando Quezada, director of the biotechnology project at the Massachusetts Centers of Excellence Corporation, pointed out that "there are more opportunities for minorities than ever before" and this message must be attractively communmicated to youngsters.

For example, the fledgling biotechnology industry in New England (80 biotech corporations in Massachusetts and another 30 in the other five states) shows great economic promise. "As the industry expands into scaled-up production activities, career tracks are opening up in several managerial, financial, and technological areas of commercial biotech development." But as yet, Blacks and Hispanics are "grossly underrepresented" in biotech companies. Young minority students should be informed of the exciting job prospects in this new industry and what educational skills are required, concluded Quezada.

Consciousness-Raising by Government

Government officials themselves, maintained Robert Schwartz, special assistant to the Massachusetts governor for educational affairs, must take steps to encourage the educational aspirations and achievements of minority students. Outreach to young students is one example. Another is the practice of the California higher education system which sends a letter to every family in the state, co-signed by government leaders, that pledges "we want your child in higher education" and outlines the steps parents and guardians need to take to make this a reality. The California example, explained Schwartz, demonstates a move from "an awareness of capability to an expectation that citizens will move into higher education."

Transitional programs such as Upward Bound bring minority youngsters onto campuses for enrichment programs. Career Beginnings, the new Brandeis University initiative, gives special attention to high school juniors who are not identified as college bound. The program demonstrates that, with special help, these students can succeed academically.

Financial aid alone to needy college students is usually not sufficient. Mentoring and special advising help students stay in college and graduate. Government officials should underscore the importance of mentoring and extra academic and psychological attention that helps to ensure the success of students who at first may be bewildered by the college experience.

Build Math and Science into College Programs

The final panelist, Rhode Island Senator Charles Walton, a member of the Senate Finance Committee, insisted that campuses do a disservice to minority and majority students when they do not require mathematics and science courses in such programs as ethnic studies, liberal arts, and social-welfare administration. Without these analytical courses, students will find themselves at a permanent disadvantage.

Colleges, according to Walton, must do a better job of collaborating with nearby high schools as well as with local businesses. If all three sectors are in constant touch with one another, then youngsters will be better prepared for higher education and post-graduation careers.

In conclusion, panel moderator Carolyn Morwick, executive director of the New England Caucus of State Legislatures, praised the specific recommendations of NEBHE's report Equity and Pluralism and agreed that retention and graduation of Hispanic and Black students from high school and college is one of the most important goals for the region.

PANEL: "HELPING COMMUNITY COLLEGE GRADUATES MOVE ON TO FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES"

The Problem

More than 50 percent of minority students in U.S. community colleges are not persisting and graduating with an Associate's degree, explained Edward Liston, president of the Community College of Rhode Island. While access to community college has been stressed in the past, now the emphasis must be not merely on enrolling students but on their actual completion of the two-year program and actual receipt of the degree, an increasingly "important credential," demonstrating the student is a "finisher."

In addition, it is imperative that a far greater proportion of community college students move on to four-year campuses to continue their academic careers. As the NEBHE report (Equity and Pluralism) makes clear, a majority of Black and Hispanic students in the region begin their higher education in community colleges, but then do not go on. Studies cited by Liston demonstrate that those who have gone on do as well as or better than students who began their freshman year at the four-year campus.

Barriers to Going On

Judith Sanford-Harris, assistant dean of academic affairs at Bunker Hill Community College, called on four-year campuses to remove the barriers they construct. Frequently, four-year institutions refuse to accept the academic credits earned at the community-college level, even when all campuses are fully accredited by outside agencies and all are members of a statewide educational system.

The American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business should rethink its rules: presently its members recognize only business courses taken in the last two years of a four-year program.

Sanford-Harris added that bewilderment of community college students is a barrier that fortunately is being overcome. Students must have strong and continuous academic advising throughout their community-college years so they can visualize what "moving on" will involve and will feel ready for the challenge when they arrive at the four-year campus. There should be a special advising center, especially for transfer students. Scholarships earmarked for transfer students are another necessity. As a further bridge, there should be faculty exchanges and collaborative projects between two-year and four-year campuses.

Partnerships and Minority Fellowship Programs

To motivate youngsters to pursue higher education, community colleges in Connecticut invite high school students to enroll, free of charge, in up to two courses prior to their senior year in high school. The third panelist, Antonio Perez, president of South Central Community College, reported that average students -- not only academic "superstars" -- are showing considerable interest in this option. Community colleges, in partnerships with high schools, should develop other means of drawing students quickly into higher education.

Agreements ensuring that four-year campuses will accept academic credits earned at certain community colleges must become widespread, according to Perez. Such "articulation" agreements between Massachusetts community colleges and the University of Lowell, University of Massachusetts and

Worcester Polytechnic Institute have worked successfully in pre-engineering programs.

Also deserving emulation, according to Perez, is a minority fellowship program at SCCC. Minority graduate students in Connecticut are invited to teach at the community college during the last year of their graduate work. Receiving $3000 per semester, the teacher is on a kind of probation during which both the individual and the institution can get to know one another. In addition, certain resources are set aside to be used for professional development of minority faculty. All these strategies are proving useful and are consistent with the Connecticut Board of Higher Education's mandate to increase the number of minority staff, faculty and students on Connecticut's public and private campuses.

Panel moderator Judith Allen, executive director of the New England Regional Office of the College Board, concluded that there needs to be greater cooperation between community colleges and four-year colleges to remove the academic barriers that are inhibiting transfer.

ADDRESS: "COMPETITIVENESS AND CHANGE IN NEW ENGLAND BUSINESS"
BY: BADI FOSTER, PRESIDENT, AETNA INSTITUTE FOR CORPORATE EDUCATION

Foster submitted that the weaknesses marring American businesses and colleges and universities are strikingly similar and must be remedied if the nation is to remain competitive in a global and increasingly sophisticated market. Foster cited these common weaknesses:

- contempt for the customer/learner
- attention to and heightening of quality on a piecemeal, rather than systemic, basis
- slow response to market changes
- inflexible bureaucratic structure
- excessive specialization of employees/faculty
- large operating units
- emphasis on cost-reduction rather than reduction of waste
- employees/faculty unable to be productive team players; unable to manage change; unable to rebound from failure; self-centered; afraid of risk; convinced that credentials are more important than competence; uncommitted to the notion that learning is continuous and lifelong.

Moving to transform itself from a New England corporation to a global financial company, the Aetna is actively addressing the weaknesses cited above. The company, Foster explained, is beginning to "think globally and manage locally." Diversity (sexual, cultural, racial) is as essential in Aetna's workforce as it is on campuses: new and various perspectives and insights help to improve decision-making and reduce the risk of wrong choices stemming from narrow-mindedness. Moreover, demographic changes demand that corporations change from homogeneous to hetereogeneous workforces and campuses to heterogeneous student bodies and faculties.

Educators Talk to their own Tribe

Foster urged education leaders to talk more frequently with business leaders--as they are doing at this conference. Too often educators "talk to their own tribe" and fail to learn the language spoken in the business world. What would be even more helpful, he said, are new metaphors, new arguments, new evidence capable of persuading business leaders to join with the education community, for the purpose of enhancing Black and Hispanic students' aspirations and achievements. Foster also urged faculty and administrators to get in the habit of explaining, cogently, the value of academic courses and programs taken by the students. The frequent opaqueness of course descriptions was criticized. Finally, Foster agreed with several conference participants that economically poor white students who are "first generation" (meaning their parents did not attend college) deserve the special mentoring and encouragement described in the NEBHE report, Equity and Pluralism. Reaching out to help the "least well-served" will benefit the entire region, whether they are members of minority or majority groups.

ADDRESS: "QUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY: THE UNFINISHED AGENDA"
BY: PAUL TSONGAS, ESQ., CHAIRMAN, MASSACHUSETTS BOARD OF REGENTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION (Former U.S. Senator, Massachusetts)

Tsongas maintained that New England institutions of higher education--their faculty, students, and administrators--must do far more to assist the secondary schools (kindergarten through 12th grade). "There must be commitment to communities and schools with the greatest need," he said. Boston University's proposed management of the Chelsea, Massachusetts school system is a bold plan which should be tried. Far more experiments in "adopting a school" are required. For example, "imagine the results" if two faculty members from each department at the University of Lowell visited in school classrooms once per month, to hold discussions with students.

Reaching out to the business community is also a necessity. Business leaders should be appointed to campus boards of trustees. Likewise, higher education leaders should sit on corporate boards of directors.

Long-Term Economic Prospects for the United States

"The economic survival of this nation," according to Tsongas, "depends on the quality of K-12 and higher education." This tenet must be made clear by the education community. Business leaders must also be recruited to "preach education." The president of the Xerox Corporation should not be the only business executive traveling throughout the country to underscore this message. Where are the business leaders from New England and Massachusetts? Besides quality, there must be wide access for all to a stimulating and nurturing education. Otherwise, a permanent underclass in New England and the nation will result.

Unless the United States improves the educational preparation of its students, it will find itself left behind by those countries with "purpose, will, and leadership." "While the federal government can find money for Star Wars, it can find very little for education." In Massachusetts, "those advocating no new taxes could care less," Tsongas asserted. Jerry Williams (a radio talk show host) and Barbara Anderson (head of Citizens for Limited Taxation) "do not care" about the layoff of teachers in K-12 due to the deficit in the state budget. For the first time in the state, access to higher education for the state's citizens has been trimmed. The refusal to raise new state revenues will produce even more trauma in the months ahead. Tsongas hopes to structure a public referendum in the state in 1990 that allows citizens to say "yes" to education and to earmarking a certain percentage of the state budget for higher education. Grass-roots support could be obtained in this way.

Coupled with the nation's educational weakness is its growing colonization by foreign nations. "Forty" is the number to remember. Forty is the percentage of foreign economic claims on the total worth of U.S. businesses. This percentage translates to $1 trillion. Where is the national or state leadership that would reverse such a trend? "Foreigners will be able to force austerity on this country"--such a long-term economic prospect is truly frightening and must be communicated to the public. In addition, "while Great Britain now has a positive trade flow, the U.S. is the only industrial nation with a trade deficit, in fact a very negative trade deficit." Given these two economic facts, new leadership must awaken us from our lethargy and self-centeredness. If it does not, this country's relative standing in the world will continue to decline.

STATE PLANS OF ACTION

In one-and-one-half hour sessions, delegates from each New England state decided what concrete actions they would take to implement the recommendations from Equity and Pluralism.

CONNECTICUT

Delegates will work with the Connecticut Board of Higher Education to develop a long-term "Grow Your Own" plan whereby Connecticut campuses will give special mentoring and support to promising minority graduate students and then hire them as junior faculty at Connecticut colleges and universities.

In addition, delegates will establish a clearinghouse to circulate information about model programs in the state promoting Black and Hispanic academic achievement. When promising initiatives do not receive adequate publicity and dissemination, they cannot inspire emulation and action to the maximum extent.

[Co-Chairs: Antonio Perez, president, South Central Community College; Louis Campbell, assistant director for grants and contracts, Connecticut Department of Higher Education.
Recorder: Sara Melendez, vice provost and executive assistant to the president, University of Bridgeport]

MAINE

To achieve more diversity on Maine campuses, delegates will initiate faculty/student exchanges whereby minority students and faculty from U.Mass/Boston and other New England campuses will work and study for a year at Maine colleges and universities. Conversely, students and faculty members from Maine will work and study for a year at campuses elsewhere in New England that have more diverse student bodies and faculties.

Expanding the summer Minority Weekend Program that now includes Bates, Bowdoin, and Colby Colleges is another goal. The public campuses in the state are eager to have minority students from throughout the nation visit at their institutions as well, and consider enrolling there.

Delegates also pledged to help organize a statewide clearinghouse to disseminate information about research, sponsored activities and programs related to minority concerns. Calling for all campus presidents in the state to collaborate more effectively, delegates pointed out that alliances among campuses could enhance the hiring of more Black and Hispanic faculty and the recruiting and graduating of more Hispanic and Black students.

[Chair of State Delegation: Samory Rashid, associate director of admissions for minority students, University of Maine at Orono.
Recorder: Doris Vladimiroff, director, Upward Bound Program, Bowdoin College.]

MASSACHUSETTS

A state newsletter will be produced by delegates, highlighting model programs for Black and Hispanic students and faculty. To come to closure on other actions, delegates will meet again within two months and report their state plan of action to the New England Board of Higher Education.

[Co-Chairs: Peter Conklin, program manager, Digital Equipment Corp.; Joan Becker, director, Urban Scholars Program, University of Massachusetts/Boston.
Recorder: Palmer Swanson, director of public affairs, Polaroid Corp.]

NEW HAMPSHIRE

A new alliance wil be formed to ensure more programs and services in the state for students "least served," whether they are members of majority or minority groups. Parties to the alliance will be business and education leaders in the state and the New Hampshire Council of Colleges and Universities. Further, the New Hampshire Educational Oppportunity Association will focus its October 1989 conference on ways to implement the recommendations from Equity and Pluralism.

[Co-Chairs: State Rep. Jackie Domaingue, House Education Committee; Judith Haywood, dean, School of Nursing, Rivier College.
Recorder: Matt Lamstein, director, Upward Bound Program, University of New Hampshire.]

RHODE ISLAND

Delegates from the state will hold two additional workshops during 1989 to follow-up on the 20 recommendations in Equity and Pluralism. Organized by the Rhode Island Commissioner of Higher Education, the workshops will adopt the 20 recommendations as an overall plan for the state and move into action, with special emphasis being given to those "least served" by school programs and at highest risk of dropping out.

[Co-Chairs: Americo Petrocelli, commissioner, Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education; Brenda Dann-Messier, president, New England Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel and director, Educational Opportunity Center, Community College of Rhode Island.
Recorder: Ronald Andsager, first vice president and human resources director, Rhode Island Hospital Trust National Bank.]

VERMONT

Delegates will invite speakers from outside the state (drawn from business, higher education, media and government) to speak to Vermonters about pluralism. Exchanges to bring more minority students and faculty to Vermont campuses for a year will be established. Finally, special efforts will be directed towards nurturing the academic dreams and achievements of "rural poor" youngsters and adults.

[Chair: Timothy Wick, director of Talent Search, Vermont Student Assistance Corp.]

Conclusion to Conference

Praising the "candor and specificity" of the discussions and state plans, Arnold Mitchem, president of the Institute for Educational Opportunity and executive director of the National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations (Washington, DC), urged vigorous follow-through.

Mitchem pointed out that the Summit has "the potential to be a seminal conference if the New England Board of Higher Education and New England Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel are willing to join together to be the catalytic force to convince policymakers and corporate leaders to behave and think differently about minority education." The two organizations can form a "unique and powerful coalition."

Mitchem underscored a remark made earlier by Panelist Sylvia Simmons: "TRIO programs are programs whose time has come." "We should not reinvent the wheel", Mitchem advised, "as we already have in place these effective programs for improving the educational and employment futures of minorities in New England."

Reiterating Panel Moderator Beth Warren's earlier remarks, Mitchem emphasized that future actions to improve educational opportunity must be

- comprehensive
- intensive
- sustained
- caring.

"We have to do for other people's children (the children of the poor) what we do for our own," Mitchem urged.

In conclusion, the conference has made clear that a "quartet of forces"--businesses, state and federal governments, higher education campuses, elementary and secondary schools--must be deployed if educational and employment opportunities are to be increased for those least served. "The time for appeals to people's sensitivities is over," according to Mitchem. "The direct link to the health of the economy and the labor market must be stressed." Mitchem also commended the participants at the Summit for their contributions and commitment to action on behalf of Blacks and Hispanics in New England.

John Hoy, president of the New England Board of Higher Education, pledged that NEBHE would monitor the state plans and move forward with other strategies directed toward implementing the recommendations from Equity and Pluralism. The continuing efforts of the New England Association of Educational Opportunity Program Personnel, according to president Brenda Dann-Messier, will be directed towards the same goal.

EQUITY AND PLURALISM:

Full Participation of Blacks and Hispanics in New England Higher Education

The Report of the Task Force on Black and Hispanic Student Enrollment and Retention in New England

January 1989

NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Summary
Task Force Findings

1. It is an economic necessity that a larger proportion of New England's Black and Hispanic residents join the region's skilled labor force.
2. Even though New England may be the higher-education capital of the world, an unacceptably low number of Black and Hispanic students receive undergraduate, graduate, or professional degrees from the region's colleges and universities.
3. Inadequate financial aid is a barrier for low-income students in many areas of the region and accounts in large part for the disappointing rate of participation of Blacks and Hispanics in New England undergraduate and graduate study.
4. Community-college students, a substantial number of whom are Black and Hispanic, understandably cut short their pursuit of a bachelor's degree when they find that many of their community-college course credits will not be accepted by four-year institutions, and that the transfer process itself is bewildering.
5. A more nurturing climate on New England campuses is required for Black and Hispanic students, faculty, and staff—as well as for first-generation students (those whose parents did not attend college).
6. Racist behavior and attitudes on New England campuses must be acknowledged and eradicated.
7. Black and Hispanic students possessing average academic abilities require special encouragement. Colleges perform a disservice to themselves and society when they aggressively compete for academic superstars and exclude students with more modest credentials who are capable of demanding academic work.
8. The New England states have inadequate data-collection systems for tracking the progress in higher education of racial and ethnic minorities. Moreover, there are an inadequate number of longitudinal and other studies being performed that would provide insights into students' successes and failures, how they can be better counseled and taught, how their securing of appropriate employment after graduation can be enhanced, and other important topics.
9. Predominantly negative and stereotypical images of Blacks and Hispanics in the media must give way to more positive portrayals and success stories embodying the value, joy and economic value of education.

Summary
Task Force Recommendations

To the Governors and State Legislators of New England

1. Through public policies and appropriation of resources, states should underwrite remedial work for elementary and high-school students who are headed toward dropping out, support preschool enrichment programs for underprivileged children, and financially assist campuses with remedial work for entering students.
2. States should provide more financial aid for low-income students at all levels of higher education.
3. States should re-emphasize existing laws providing for equal educational opportunity and insist that campuses look inward and address and eradicate racism.
4. States should underwrite retraining and adult literacy programs for older Black and Hispanic adults so they can join the skilled laborforce.

To College and University Presidents, Faculty, Students, Staff, and Boards of Trustees

5. College and university presidents should exercise their leadership in bringing about pluralism—in the student body, faculty, staff, and boards of trustees as well as in the curriculum. Presidents and boards of trustees should make a greater commitment to the academic success and expanded enrollment of Black and Hispanic students. Presidents, in their annual reports, should document the progress their campuses are making in these areas.
6. Presidents should activate self-assessments of their campuses' racial climate and then adopt initiatives to address problems discovered.
7. The transfer of academic credits from community colleges to four-year colleges and universities must be facilitated and community college students encouraged to seek a bachelor's degree.
8. Graduate schools should create a more hospitable setting for Blacks and Hispanics to gain master's and doctoral degrees.
9. Faculty and students should help provide academic enrichment programs and one-to-one tutoring for at-risk youngsters in neighboring communities.
10. Campuses should pay special attention to average students and help them master basic competencies.

Summary
Task Force Recommendations

To the Commissioners and Chancellors of Higher Education Systems in New England

11. Provide executive leadership to ensure that campuses adopt a more pluralistic approach to teaching and learning.
12. Improve data collection within each New England state so that minority students' academic successes and failures can be better tracked, and progress towards pluralism on campus can be better understood and encouraged.
13. Ensure minority representation on boards of trustees and on accreditation reviews of all public campuses.

To the New England Board of Higher Education

14. Disseminate information annually on the progress of the New England states and their campuses in heightening Black and Hispanic participation in higher education—as students, faculty, administrators, and staff members.
15. Disseminate information on successful efforts that are making campuses (their curriculum, their personnel, their student population) more pluralistic.

To the Business Community

16. Continue to initiate partnerships with financially poor schools in order to provide special mentoring to youngsters, upgrade the teaching and guarantee jobs to graduates.
17. Provide scholarships as well as workplace internships to Black and Hispanic undergraduate and graduate students.
18. Continue to promote pluralism in the workplace through sensitivity workshops, role-playing and other means designed to break down cultural, sexual and racial stereotypes.

To Publishers/Producers of Newspapers, Television, Radio and Film

19. Ensure more positive and diverse presentations of Blacks and Hispanics in the media. Produce more success stories about Blacks and Hispanics. Reveal that education can be ennobling and empowering.
20. Consistently report on the progress (or lack thereof) in improving the participation of Hispanics and Blacks in the educated workforce and in New England higher education.

SUMMIT ON EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
IN NEW ENGLAND

April 4-5, 1989
Newport, Rhode Island

WELCOMING SPEAKERS

John Hoy
President, New England Board of Higher Education

The Honorable Robert McKenna
Mayor of Newport
President, R.I. Independent Higher Education Association

Arnold Mitchem
President, Institute for Educational Opportunity

Edward Korza
President, New England Association of
Educational Opportunity Program Personnel

GUEST SPEAKERS

Badi Foster
President, Aetna Institute for Corporate Training

Topic: **"Competitiveness and Change in New England Business"**

* * *

The Honorable Paul Tsongas, Esq.
Chairman, Massachusetts Board of Regents of Higher Education
(Former U.S. Senator, Massachusetts)

Topic: **"Quality and Opportunity: The Unfinished Agenda"**

PANELS (ADDRESSING THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN NEBHE'S "EQUITY AND PLURALISM")

A) Media Leaders — "How Television, Radio and Newspapers Can Nurture Minority Aspirations and Achievements"

Panelists:
- Donna Latson Gittens, Vice President, Community Affairs, WCVB-TV (Needham)
- Jeff Rivers, Associate Editor, Hartford Courant
- Cecilia Soriano Bresnahan, Principal, Boston Communications Group (Co-Host, CENTRO, WBZ-TV)

Moderator:
- John Sawhill, General Manager and Vice President, WJAR-TV, (Providence)

B) Education Leaders — "Creating Pluralism on Campus"

Panelists:
- Edgar Beckham, Dean, Wesleyan University
- Sarah Melendez, Vice Provost, University of Bridgeport

Moderator:
- Beth Warren, Executive Director, Human Resources, University of Southern Maine

C) Business Leaders — "Pluralism in the Workplace"

Panelists:
- Ronald Homer, President and CEO, Boston Bank of Commerce
- Reynaldo Cruz, Project Manager, Digital Equipment Corp.
- Fernando Comulada, President, Comulada Enterprises Ltd. (Trustee, R.I. Board of Governors for Higher Education)
- Margaret Costa, Personnel Manager, Hasbro Corporation

Moderator:
- Kenneth Rossano, Director of Development, Bank of Boston

D) Government Leaders — "Government's Roles in Promoting Minority Advancement"

Panelists:
- State Sen. John Olver (MA), Chair, Senate Taxation Committee
- Fernando Quezada, Director, Biotechnology Project, Massachusetts Centers of Excellence Corporation
- Robert Schwartz, Special Assistant to the Governor for Educational Affairs, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- State Sen. Charles Walton (RI), Senate Finance Committee

Moderator:
- Carolyn Morwick, Executive Director, New England Caucus of State Legislatures

E) Education Leaders — "Helping Community College Graduates Move on to Four-Year Colleges"

Panelists:
- Edward Liston, President, Community College of Rhode Island
- Antonio Perez, President, South Central Community College
- Judith Sanford-Harris, Assistant Dean of Academic Affairs, Bunker Hill Community College

Moderator:
- Judith Allen, Executive Director, New England Regional Office, The College Board

F) Education Leaders — "Supporting Educational Achievements of Blacks and Hispanics"

Panelists:
- Gayle Pemberton, Director of Minority Affairs, Bowdoin College
- Sylvia Simmons, Senior Vice President, Mass. Higher Education Assistance Corp. (former Chair, Board of Trustees, North Shore Community College)
- Charles Desmond, Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, University of Massachusetts at Boston
- Gail Leftwich, Attorney, Goodwin, Procter & Hoar (Trustee, Bridgewater State College)

Moderator:
- Matthew Lamstein, Director, Upward Bound Program, Univ. of N.H.

STATE DELEGATION SESSIONS
TO FORMULATE STATE PLANS OF ACTION

CONNECTICUT Delegation (attended by all from Connecticut)

Chair: Antonio Perez, President, South Central Community College
Discussion Leader: Louis Campbell, Assistant Director for Grants and Contracts, Connecticut Department of Higher Education
Editor/Recorder: Sara Melendez, Vice Provost, University of Bridgeport

MAINE Delegation (attended by all from Maine)

Chair: Samory Rashid, Associate Director of Admissions for Minority Students, University of Maine at Orono
Editor/Recorder: Doris Vladimiroff, Director, Upward Bound Program, Bowdoin College

MASSACHUSETTS Delegation (attended by all from Massachusetts)

Chair: Peter Conklin, Program Manager, Digital Equipment Corp.
Discussion Leader: Joan Becker, Director, Urban Scholars, University of Massachusetts at Boston
Editor/Recorder: Palmer Swanson, Director of Public Affairs, Polaroid Corporation

NEW HAMPSHIRE Delegation (attended by all from New Hampshire)

Co-Chairs: State Rep. Jackie Domaingue, House Education Committee; Judith Haywood, Dean, School of Nursing, Rivier College
Editor/Recorder: Matt Lamstein, Director, Upward Bound Program, University of New Hampshire

RHODE ISLAND Delegation (attended by all from Rhode Island)

Chair: Americo Petrocelli, Commissioner, Rhode Island Board of Governors for Higher Education
Discussion Leader: Brenda Dann-Messier, Incoming President of NEAEOPP; Director, Educational Opportunity Center, Community College of Rhode Island
Editor/Recorder: Ronald Andsager, First Vice President and Human Resources Director, Rhode Island Hospital Trust National Bank

VERMONT Delegation (attended by all from Vermont)

Chair: Timothy Wick, Director of Talent Search, Vermont Student Assistance Corp.

SUMMIT CONCLUSION

Arnold Mitchem
President, Institute for Educational Opportunity

John C. Hoy
President, New England Board of Higher Education

NEW ENGLAND BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

NEBHE Task Force on Black and Hispanic Student Enrollment and Retention in New England

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